commissioners who were sent directly by the Emperor to handle some emergency, such as a drought, a flood, or a rebellion.

All officials were appointed directly from the capital, so that centralization was characteristic of the system. The civil officials were charged—in true Confucian manner—with looking after the welfare and encouraging the morals of the people. Agriculture was fostered, a system of public granaries being reestablished in which stores were accumulated in years of plenty to be distributed to the poor for food and for seed in times of dearth.

As a necessary foundation to this bureaucracy, T'ai Tsung maintained and reenforced the state schools and the public examinations. Although his family professed descent from Lao Tzu (for the latter[5]s reputed patronymic was likewise Li) and so had Taoist leanings, he strengthened the Confucian cult by decreeing that in all the colleges of the Empire Confucius and Confucius' favorite disciple should be venerated. He discontinued the sacrifices which, in accord with earlier practice, his father had ordered made to Chou Kung jointly with those to Confucius. Tai Tsung commanded a temple to be erected to Confucius in each of the *chou* and *hsierij* and later (647) honors were ordered paid in these not only to Confucius but to twenty-two noteworthy scholars, mostly of the Han.

It must be noted, however, that examinations and degrees were not confined to the Confucian Classics narrowly interpreted, nor even to the literature of the Confucian school. They were also given, among other subjects, in history, law, mathematics, poetry, calligraphy, and Taoist philosophy.

As a warrior, T'ai Tsung continued to deserve the reputation which he had earned in the campaigns which

brought his family to the throne. He reorganized the army, placing it on a more regular and efficient basis, and improved its weapons. He laid emphasis on the cavalry—perhaps because of the example of his non-Chinese opponents on the north and west. He gave China a very good fighting machine.

It was not strange that under T'ai Tsung the Empire again entered on a career of foreign conquest. Especially in the West he extended its power, pushing the Chinese frontiers farther into Central Asia than they had been at any time since the Han. Toward the close of his father's and at the outset of his own reign,